

4.1 WANNON & NIGRETТА FALLS

Significant Landscape

Character Type **4** The Rolling Tablelands

Character Area **4.3** Vegetated Tablelands

The Wannon and Nigretta Falls are two picturesque waterfalls located in close proximity to each other on the Wannon River, north west of Hamilton.

Viewing locations within this landscape include:

Lookout points within the Wannon and Nigretta Scenic Reserves.

Major viewing corridors:

- Wannon - Nigretta Falls Road
- Camerons Road (Wannon Falls Reserve)

Overall Landscape Significance Rating: State

A detailed significance assessment is provided over the following pages.



Nigretta Falls

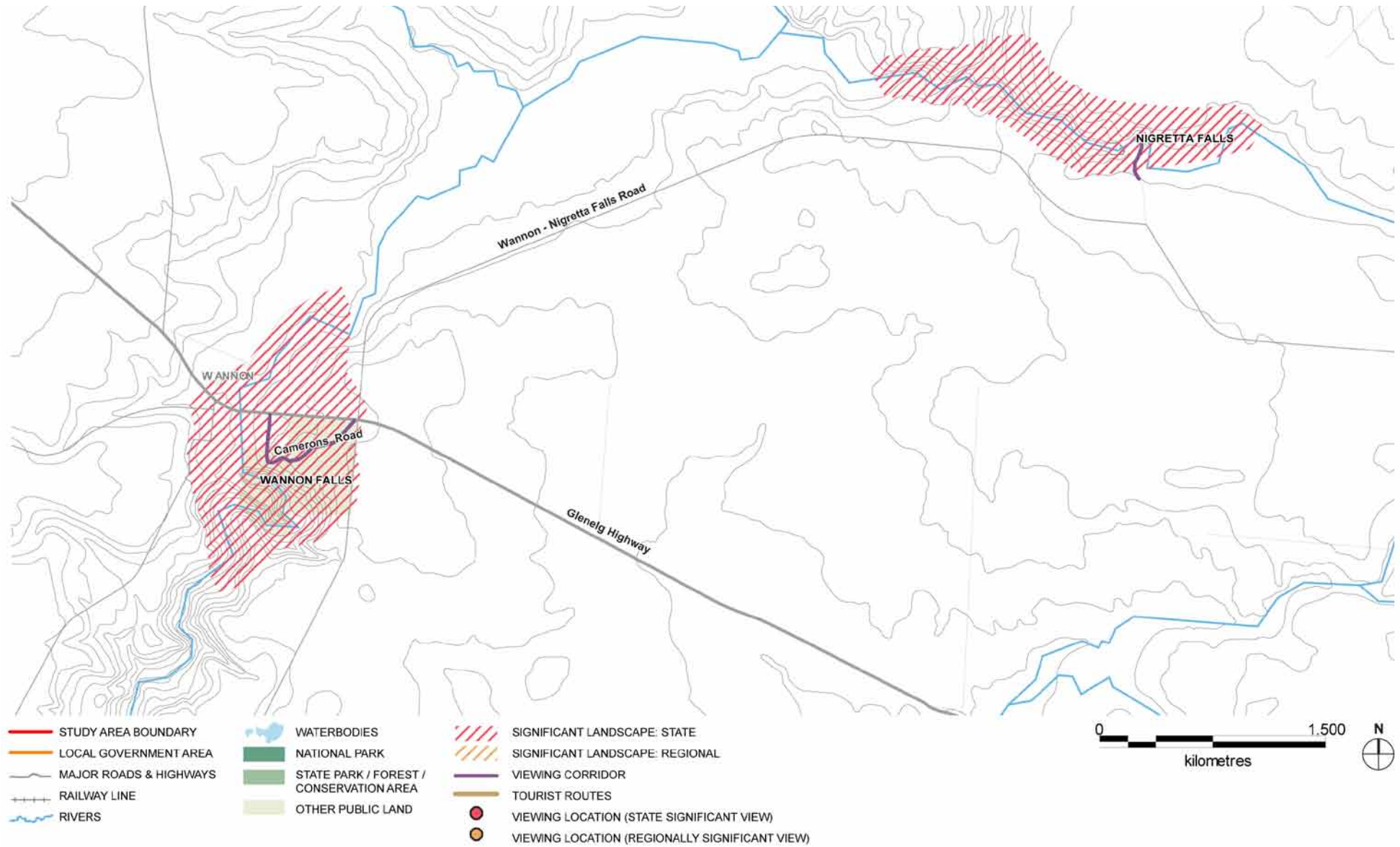


Louis Buvelot: One of the Falls of the Wannon, 1872



Wannon Falls

Landscape Significance Map



Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	The Wannon and Nigretta Falls are stunning waterfalls located within 10km of each other on the Wannon River. At the Wannon Falls, the water drops 30m down in a steady stream to a deep, circular pool below. The movement of water over time has eroded away a deep cavern behind the drop. These Falls were created by lava flows that travelled up valley of the present day Wannon River. The Nigretta Falls cascade from a hard rock outcrop, streams of water are divided by clefts in the rock and dispersed in a more widespread pattern with various tributaries sprouting from the sides to fall down a series of rocky terraces.	The Wannon and Nigretta Falls are exemplary scenic waterfalls. They are rare in a regional context, being the most spectacular falls to the west of the Grampians.	High (Regional)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	The placid, flowing waters of the Wannon River are abruptly interrupted by the steep drops of the waterfalls. The constant movement and churning of water as it cascades over the edge of the rocky precipices is an eye catching and scenic feature of both Falls. The narrow river valleys lined with chunky, rock outcrops have created deep incisions in the undulating plain that surrounds. The undercutting of the cavernous space behind the Wannon Falls and the circular formation of the pool below is a spectacular natural feature.	Both Falls provide a stunning contrast to the surrounding agricultural land. They are memorable places featuring exemplary displays of waterform.	High (Regional)
COMPOSITION	Survey	Both Falls are visually accessed by paths and platforms that provide clear viewing angles. The dark basalt rock of the Wannon Falls is a reminder of its volcanic origins, and deep green mosses grow in the consistently damp environment. Downstream of the Falls, rocks tumble down to form a series of rapids and the narrow river valley walls are lined with chunky outcrops of lichen covered rock. The Nigretta Falls are made of a much harder, older rock that has lighter terracotta tones and deep grooves incised vertically in the surface. Paths to the bottom of the Falls allow a much more intimate experience with the churning waters. Both Falls are seasonally variable, with cascading floods creating dramatic and powerful overflows, that slow to a more sedate flow after periods of lesser rainfall. Their stunning formation has been the subject of many works of art, from colonial artists to contemporary photographers.	Both the Wannon and Nigretta Falls are iconic landscape features, entrenched in the history and identity of the region. The Wannon Falls are particularly rare as they are the product of volcanic activity, which is unique in the context of the Volcanic Plain of Victoria. Waterfalls of this capacity are generally associated with the Uplands areas of Victoria, rather than the edges of the Volcanic Plain.	Exceptional (State)
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				State

Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area.
Southern Grampians Planning Scheme	Both Falls were early tourist attractions within the Western District from the 1800's onwards, promoted for their picturesque qualities and set aside as scenic reserves in the 1900s. Exotic vegetation at Nigretta Falls is remnant of a homestead that once existed there.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Southern Grampians Planning Scheme	Nigretta Falls Reserve and Wannon Falls Reserve are protected under the Southern Grampians Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO3 & SLO4) which considers them to be of State level significance.
IUCN	Both Reserves are protected areas on the IUCN list, Category III (Natural Monument or Feature).
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Wannon and Nigretta Falls are the traditional country of the Gunditjmara people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
Desktop Research	The Falls are socially significant as recreation reserves and attract a significant number of visitors.
Southern Grampians Planning Scheme Desktop Research	The Falls were the subject of much significant art from early colonial artists including Eugene von Geuard, Charles Chevalier and Louis Buvelot. The Falls also feature in more contemporary artworks, particularly those created by photographic artists and tourists who regularly visit the area.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

OTHER SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Tourist Information	The Falls are visitor attractions for the area which contributes to the local economy.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

4.2 THE HUMMOCKS WANDO VALE

Significant Landscape

Character Type **4** Rolling Tablelands

Character Area **4.2** Open Valleys

This cleared, rolling landscape is part of a highly scenic area to the north of Casterton. The Hummocks is a unique geological feature with a tragic history that provide a distinct a focal point for a scenic exploration of the area.

Major viewing corridors:

- Hummocks - Retreat Rd
- Casterton - Edenhope Rd

Overall Significance Rating: Regional

A detailed significance assessment is provided over the following pages.

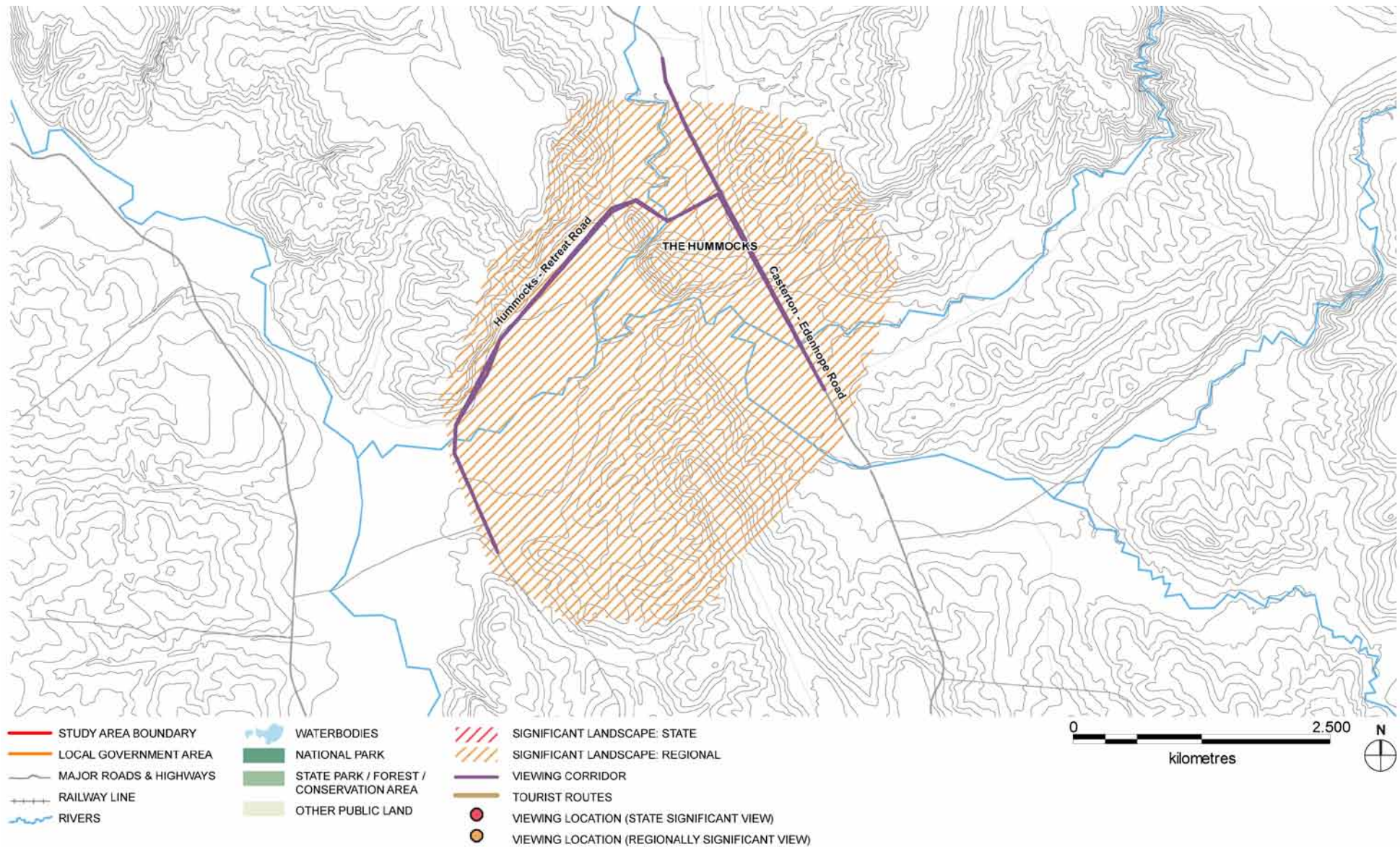


The Hummocks viewed from the eastern side on Hummocks-Retreat Road



Hummocks Retreat Road winds around the feature. The view above is towards the western face of the divide in the hill

The Hummocks Wando Vale Map



Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	The Hummocks are a distinctive geological feature among the cleared rolling hills and gently sloping river valleys of the Tablelands region. A deep, V-shaped cleft splits a hillside in two, leaving granitic outcrops and underlying bedrock exposed. The Wando River winds through the narrow gorge before joining with MacPherson Creek in the west.	The rare formation and shape of the Hummocks has made it an iconic landscape feature in this region.	High (Regional)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	<p>There is a strong contrast between the undulating valley floor and the steep hillsides that slope up on either side. This join is often marked by lines of trees that follow creeks and waterways. Granitic protrusions are common in the area.</p> <p>The outcrops visible in the cleft of the Hummocks create a sculptural landscape element that stands out from the smooth and rounded textures of the surrounding hills. The sharp lines and angles that the feature cuts into the ridge make it appear to be a man-made intrusion, however closer inspection reveals it to be the result of natural processes.</p> <p>Land surrounding the cleft is dotted with low shrubs and trees which draw attention to the feature.</p> <p>Distant hills on the skyline contain plantations that create blocks of strong contrast with the grassy hillsides.</p>	The stark contrast of the rocky cleft and the peculiarity of form is quite scarce, which makes it a highly memorable landscape experience. This adds a punctuation of variety and interest to the surrounding scenic landscape.	High (Regional)
COMPOSITION	Survey	<p>The ability to view the Hummocks from a number of angles unifies the feature with the surrounding landscape. The open, spaciousness of cleared, rolling valley assists in drawing focus to the feature, while the distant hills create a scenic backdrop.</p> <p>Grassy pastoral textures dominate the views to either side and feature seasonal transitions from golden brown in summer to a deep emerald green.</p>	The consistent focus that the feature draws has created an exemplary sense of balance in the landscape. This is heightened by the continuity of patterns and developments that exist on the surrounding slopes.	High (Regional)
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				Regional

Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area.
Museum Victoria Desktop Research Casterton Tourist Information	The party led by surveyor Major Thomas Mitchell passed through the area in 1836 as part of the Australia Felix expedition. The Hummocks are known as the “Fighting Hills,” being the site of a massacre of members of the Konongwootong gundidj clan by the Whyte brothers in 1840. It is believed around 30-40 men, women and children lost their lives, but this figure is stated to be as high as 80.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Desktop Research	The Hummocks are unique geological feature, formed by the Wando River gradually dissecting the hill, estimated to be around 150 million years old.
Glenelg Planning Scheme	The site is included within the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat area, protected under an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO3).
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Hummocks are the traditional country of the Jardwadjali people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
Tourist Information	Many local tourist pamphlets and websites note the Hummocks as a place to visit in the area.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

4.3 DERGHOLM STATE PARK

Significant Landscape

Character Type	4	The Rolling Tablelands
	5	The Wimmera Plains
Character Areas	4.3	Vegetated Tablelands
	5.1	Lakes & Wetlands

The Dergholm Park is located to the north west of Casterton, and is one of the only significant areas of public land in the Dundas Tablelands region.

Viewing corridors include:

- Dergholm- Chetwynd Road
- Baileys Rocks Road
- Glenamia Road (to Bilston's Tree)

Overall Significance Rating: Regional

A detailed significance assessment is provided over the following pages.



Bilston's Tree in Dergholm State Park



Bailey's rocks

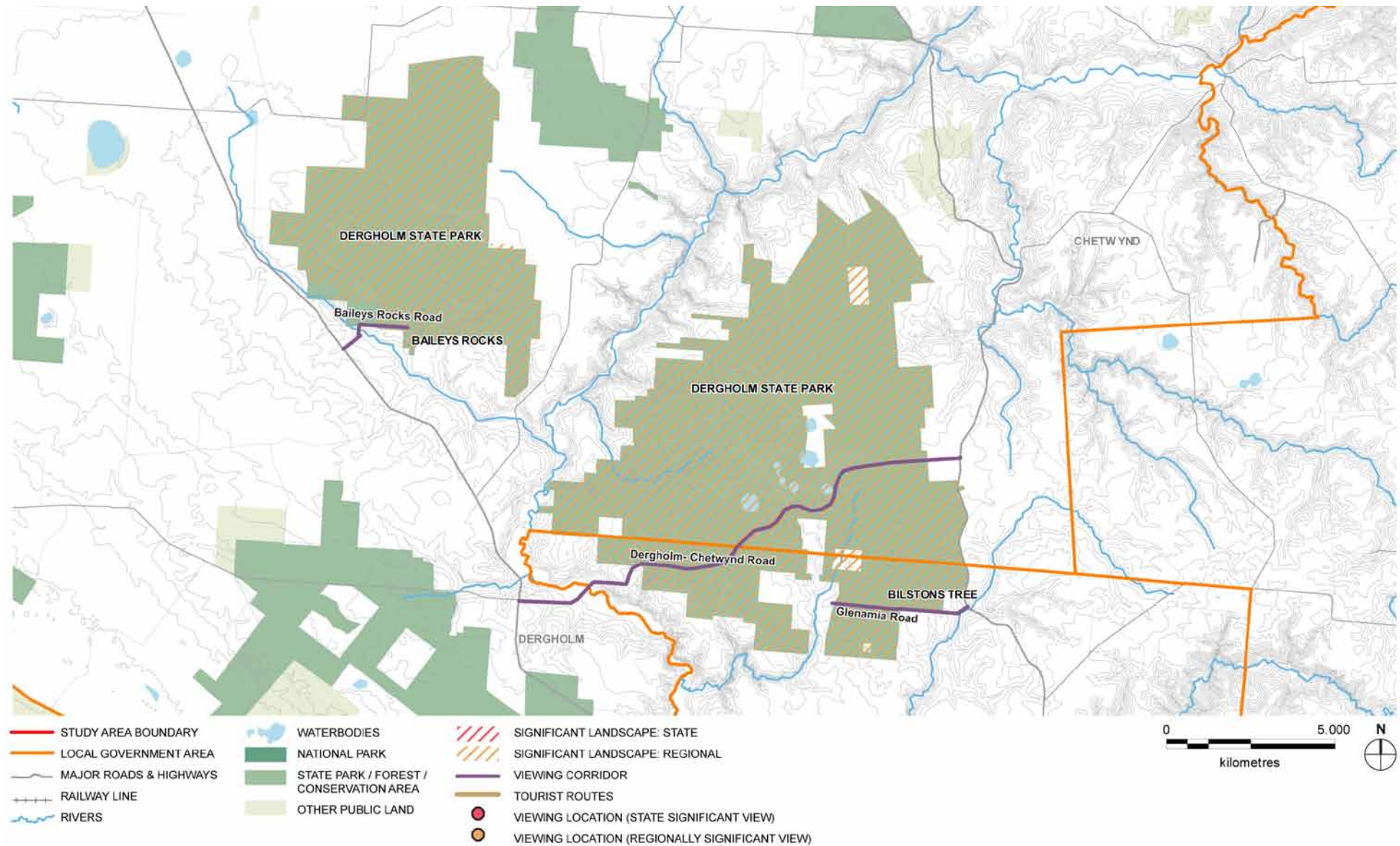


Interface area between Park and surrounds



Looking towards Dergholm State Park from the adjacent tablelands.

Landscape Significance Map



Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	<p>The Dergholm State Park is a thickly vegetated area set amongst rolling hills on the border of the Tablelands and the Wimmera Plain. The Park is traversed by the Glenelg River.</p> <p>The Park contains Bilston's Tree, which is Australia's largest River Red Gum and Bailey's Rocks which are a series of enormous and unusual green-coloured granite boulders in a dry creek bed within the northern section of the Park.</p>	Bilston's Tree and Bailey's Rocks are both scarce features within the Victorian context.	High (Regional)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	The thickly vegetated cover of the Park contrasts with the cleared surrounding paddocks. Defined areas of plantation create a textural contrast and introduce a regular geometry into this natural landscape.	The thickly vegetated forest creates an interesting and well defined contrast with the surrounding cleared paddocks.	Moderate (Local)
COMPOSITION	Survey	<p>The Dergholm State Park generally forms the wooded background to views, with the foreground and middle ground being composed of undulating cleared pastoral land with scattered remnant vegetation.</p> <p>Bailey's Rocks are a set of highly unusual and sculptural granitic tors set within the bushland.</p>	The Park creates visual interest on the horizon. Bailey's Rocks are a scarce and interesting geological formation.	Moderate (Local)
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				Regional, or higher

Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area.
Parks Victoria Desktop Research	The Park includes sites of interest associated with the history of European settlers. The area around Bailey's Rocks was first surveyed and set aside as a reserve in 1875. They are named after John Bailey who established a 1200-acre sheep property on a hill above the rocks in 1888.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Parks Victoria	The Park is important for its unique and highly diverse vegetation communities supporting a range of significant fauna species. Two nationally significant vegetation communities occur in Dergholm State Park and it represents some of the most intact and last remaining vegetation communities within the regions. It is also renowned for spectacular wildflower displays.
IUCN	The Park is assigned the IUCN Category II (National Parks) of the United Nations' List of National Parks and Protected Areas, for ecosystem conservation and appropriate recreation.
West Wimmera & Glenelg Planning Schemes	The Park is included within the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat area, protected under the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2 and ESO3 respectively).
Australian Wetlands Database	Dergholm (Youpayang) Wetlands is listed as a nationally significant wetland.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Dergholm State Park is the traditional country of the Gunditjmara people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
Parks Victoria Tourist Information	The Park provides a setting for bushwalking, picnicking, nature study and camping. Spring wildflower displays are a visitor attraction. The Park is also a focus for orienteering events for Victorians and South Australians. The drive between Bilston's Tree and Bailey's Rocks is a popular scenic route.
Desktop Research	Local conservation campaigns successfully saved the area around Bailey's Rocks from granite mining in the 1970s and the felling of Bilston's Tree, proposed in the 1960s. Both features are now significant tourist attractions for the Casterton district.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

4.4 MERINO TABLELANDS

Significant Landscape

Character Type **4** The Rolling Tablelands

Character Area **4.2** Open Valleys

This landscape represents the general characteristics of the Merino tablelands area. Long range views at highpoints provide an outlook over the cleared pastures of gently rolling hills, traversed by wooded creek lines.

Major viewing corridors:

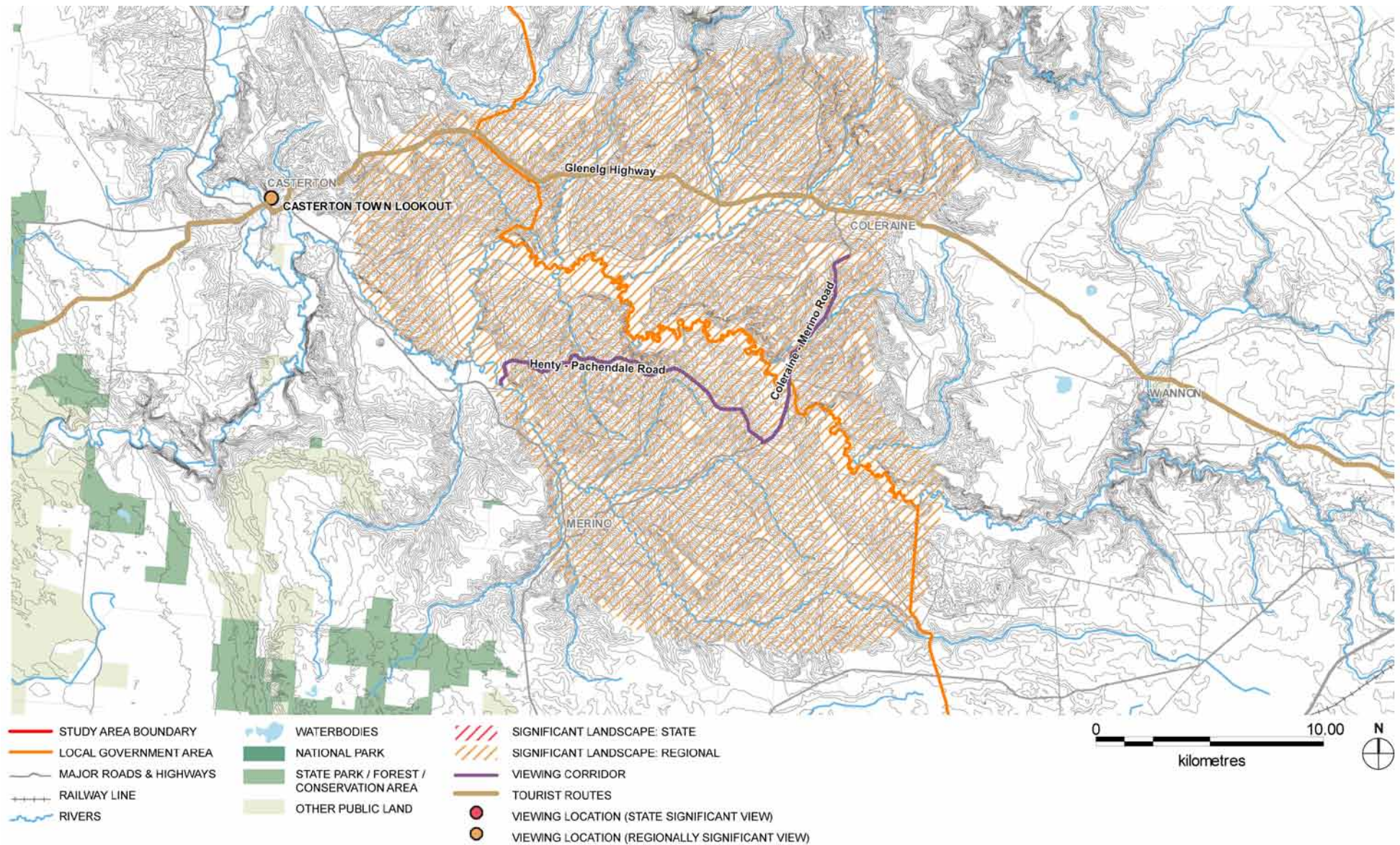
- Coleraine - Merino Road
- Paschendale - Tahara Road
- Henty - Paschendale Road

Overall Significance Rating: Regional

A detailed significance assessment is provided over the following pages.



Merino Tablelands Map



Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	The landscape comprises open, weathered, rolling topography of cleared pastures or grasslands. There are occasional shelterbelts and scattered Red Gum woodland. The topography is deeply dissected by river valleys which are highly visible and exposed due to the cleared nature of the landscape. The open nature of the landscape creates a sense of 'big skies'.	The gently rolling landscape with its deep river valleys and 'big skies' is iconic of this region of western Victoria.	High (Regional)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	This landscape is wide and open, without defined edges, however, the visible topographic features accentuate the contrast between plateau and valley.	The characteristics of this landscape are unique to this area.	High (Regional)
COMPOSITION	Survey	<p>The open nature of this landscape, of grasslands and cleared pastures, lends itself to long range views that often form continuous corridors. 'Big skies' are a feature of views in this location.</p> <p>The roads that meander through the topography are mostly rural access roads, and while not heavily travelled they are highly scenic and provide an excellent viewing experience.</p> <p>Lookout points in Casterton demonstrate how the town is nestled into the landscape, encircled by the rising hills and a bend of the Glenelg River.</p>	Excellent viewing corridors provide exemplary composition within a regional context.	High (Regional)
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				Regional

Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Local

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Department of Primary Industries	The heavily dissected nature of the tablelands area is a key feature of land in this area.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Local

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Merino Tablelands area is the traditional country of the Gunditjmara people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Local

OTHER SIGNIFICANCE

Desktop Research	Agriculture is an important contributor to the local economy.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Local